DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 298 462 CS 009 314

AUTHOR Ediger, Marlow
TITLE Reading and the Learner (A Collection of Essays).
PUB DATE 88
NOTE 85p.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - General (020) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Course Objectives; Elementary Secondary Education; *Holistic Approach; Individualized Reading; Language Experience Approach; Mastery Learning; *Motivation; *Reading Instruction; Reading Readiness; *Spelling

ABSTRACT

Reflecting a concern for a broad base of knowledge in reading, this collection contains the following essays: (1) "Reading and the Language Arts"; (2) "The Integrated Reading Curriculum"; (3) "Oral Communication and the Curriculum"; (4) "Spelling in the Curriculum"; (5) "Motivation and the Learner in Reading"; and (6) "Reform in the Reading Curriculum." (SR)

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READING AND THE LEARNER
(A Collection of Essays)

by

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READING AND THE LANGUAGE ARTS

Each pupil should develop optimum proficiency in reading. Reading can be a very enjoyable leisure activity. Individuals enrich themselves by engaging in reading activities. In society, it is important for individuals to do much reading and thus remain informed about problems and issues on the local, state, national, and international levels. Each person may then have additional alternatives from which decisions can be made. A broad base of background knowledge may assist learners to increase their proficiency to make decisions.

Each pupil differs from other children in the class setting in achievement, capacity, interests, and motivation for reading. Thus, the teacher must make provision for individual differences among learners in the reading curriculum.

Experience Charts and Reading

In a reading readiness program for early primary grade children, experience charts may be developed cooperatively by pupils with teacher guidance. The experience chart approach is sound since it is based upon personal experiences of involved pupils. Thus, pupils experience ideas from excursions, filmstrips, films, pictures, slides, or discussions. Following the experience, pupils present content for an experience chart. The teacher in this situation prints the content using neat manuscript letters. Most pupils generally have not developed a writing vocabulary to do the actual writing. After the content has been written in large, highly legible manuscript letters, pupils read what has been written with teacher guidance. The teacher points to words and phrases as they are being read by pupils. Learners

then are reading what they have experienced.

The following assumptions support utilizing experience charts:

1. Pupils are actively involved in experiences which provide content for an experience chart.
2. Learners present ideas for the experience chart.
3. Pupils with teacher help read content pertaining to their very own experiences.
4. Learners may notice how ideas are written down utilizing abstract letters in words.
5. The content in the experience chart is familiar to learners since it relates to their own personal lives.
6. The experience chart method may assist pupils to develop interest in reading.
7. Individualization is inherent in using experience charts since each child has unique experiences. Each child may then present content for a group or individual experience chart.

Learning Centers and Reading

A different approach to individualize instruction in reading pertains to the use of learning canters. One of these centers might well be a reading center. Library books should be on diverse reading levels and on various stimulating topics. Ideally each pupil selects an interesting library book to read on the appropriate reading level. Following the reading of a library book, pupil achievement may be evaluated in several ways.

1. Task cards at the learning center could be written with open-ended questions for pupils to respond to.
2. The teacher and pupil might discuss contents of a library book

which the latter has completed reading.

3. The child may choose his/her own approach in revealing comprehension pertaining to content in a library book such as in completing a diorama, a dramatization, a frieze, or a picture.
4. The pupil might share ideas gained from reading a library book within a small group or committee.

Any approach that is used to assess pupil achievement should stimulate learners to do additional reading.

Reading Readiness and Individualized Instruction

There are numerous learning activities which assist pupils in learning to read through a quality reading readiness program. Providing for individual differences is an important concept for teachers to follow when selecting learning activities in a reading readiness program.

Background information must be developed within pupils in a quality reading readiness program. Later, pupils will read much content where familiarity with ideas is important. To aid in developing background information, the following learning activities, among others, may be utilized:

1. Discuss pictures with pupils pertaining to ongoing units of study.
2. Show and discuss films, filmstrips, and slides.
3. Have pupils take an excursion and discuss observations made.
4. View and have follow-up activities pertaining to a telecast on educational television.
5. Develop learning centers with appropriate activities to help pupils achieve relevant background information.

For each of the above learning activities, purpose must be developed within pupils prior to participation. The learning activities can provide

for individual differences even though learners at selected intervals may be taught in large group instruction. Pupils may then interpret content from audio-visual materials on their own individual present achievement levels. It is best if most of these activities can be used in small group or committee work. Pupils may then have increased opportunities to interact with other learners in discussing acquired facts, concepts, and generalizations. The frequency of interaction in a discussion per pupil in small group work is greater than would be true of larger groups or the class as a whole.

In a quality reading readiness program, it is important for learners to experience hearing likenesses and differences in sounds. Thus, for example, a teacher may ask pupils to present words which have the same beginning sound as does the word "bat". Pupils may also be asked to give words which rhyme with "bat". These activities should aid learners to become increasingly proficient in phonetic analysis. Later, in more formalized programs of reading instruction, the use of phonetic analysis will aid in unlocking new words.

In a reading readiness program pupils begin to make associations between symbol and sound. When pupils are reading from an experience chart with teacher guidance, they may well notice specific letters in words and make the proper associations with sounds.

When selected objects are labeled in a class, pupils ultimately will also make associations between symbols and sounds. If they cannot identify the abstract word, the real object will tell its meaning, such as the labeled abstract word "chair" on a real chair. Pupils learn to identify individual words at different rates of speed. Provision may then be made for individual differences.

Pupils should have ample opportunities to browse through interesting

and appealing library books containing quality pictures. Illustrated books have a tendency to provide for individual differences when chosen by pupils. Learners may then interpret illustrations on their own individual achievement level. The teacher also needs to read library books to pupils in a reading readiness program. Thus, pupils may become motivated in wanting to learn to read.

Further learning activities in a reading readiness program might consist of pupils advancing at individual levels of achievement in noticing configuration clues. Experiences in noticing configuration clues must be provided in proper sequence for each learner. Among others, these learning activities may include the following:

1. Pupils make a cross on which word looks different from two other words (man lonely man).
2. Learners place an "X" on which letter appears different from two other letters (h h a).

Gross discriminations need to be made by pupils followed in sequence by those involving finer discriminations. Fine discriminations are involved in which a word or letter looks different in appearance from the remaining words/letters in each of the following sets:

1. house hen house
2. b b l
3. horse hill hill
4. a a b

Basal Readers and The Pupil

Basal readers are used quite frequently in elementary school classrooms. Teachers need to utilize the manual directly related to the basal reader in a creative manner. Too frequently, the manual is utilized rigidly. Suggestions pertaining to objectives, learning activities, and assessment procedures found in manuals of basal readers should be adapted to individual

differences in the class setting. The manual can give teachers many excellent suggestions to use in teaching-learning situations. The following criteria are recommended in helping pupils achieve to their optimum when basal readers are utilized:

1. Basal readers should be on the present achievement level of pupils when learning activities are provided.
2. Prior to reading a given selection, pupils should have adequate readiness activities such as:
   (a) gaining adequate background information.
   (b) seeing new words in manuscript print and attaching meaning to these words.
   (c) establishing purposes for reading. The purposes may pertain to questions which require answers from reading a given selection.
3. Following the reading activity, pupils should have appropriate followup activities, such as:
   (a) discussing purposes or answers to questions after reading a given selection.
   (b) writing a summary of main ideas read.
   (c) developing an illustration, frieze, mural, or diorama.
   (d) reading additional literature related to the content read.
   (e) selecting stories and books written by the same author.
   (f) reading selected portions orally.
   (g) writing diverse forms of poetry.
   (h) dramatizing selected sections of the content.
   (i) developing a related bulletin board display.

Basal readers have been misused by classroom teachers. Certainly,

teachers must apply relevant principles of learning in teaching-learning situations involving the use of basal readers. These principles would include:

(a) providing for individual differences.

(b) attaching meaning to what has been learned.

(c) stimulating learners in desiring to learn.

(d) praising pupils for improved performance regardless of past achievement.

(e) diagnosing pupil difficulties and working toward remediation.

(f) having learners achieve at their own optimum unique rates of achievement.

(g) selecting interesting learning activities.

(h) having pupils sense reasons for participating in ongoing learning activities.

(i) providing sequential learnings for learners.

(j) having pupils voice their concerns and interests in selecting reading materials.

(k) maintaing balance among objectives pertaining to learning word recognition techniques, reading for a variety of purposes, and reading for enjoyment.

There are selected procedures which have been used in situations involving the use of basal readers which definitely cannot be recommended. Among others, these include the following:

1. All pupils in a class being on the same page at the same time in a basal reader.

2. Every learning activity in the manual being utilized in teaching-learning situations for all pupils in the class setting.

3. Pupils rigidly developing learnings pertaining to phonetic analysis and other word recognition techniques when they already are reading proficiently.
4. Teachers emphasizing recall of information largely, when purposes for reading are being pursued on the part of pupils. Higher levels of thinking also need adequate emphasis, e.g. critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem solving.
5. Little emphasis being placed on pupils reading for enjoyment.
6. The same or similar methodology being used rather continuously in teaching reading.
7. Content in basal readers not being correleted or integrated with other curriculum areas in the elementary school.
8. Teachers not diagnosing pupil difficulties in reading adequately and not working toward remediation of problems.
9. Pupils not being taught in terms of using child growth and development characteristics.
10. Recommended principles of learning not being utilized in teaching-learning situations.
11. A lack of teacher knowledge or enthusiasm in teaching reading.

The teacher of reading needs to engage in self-evaluation to determine which trends in a modern reading curriculum should be emphasized in teaching-learning situations in the class setting.

Linguistics and Reading

Selected specialists have emphasized the importance of linguistic approaches in guiding learners to achieve in reading. According to one linguistic school of thought in beginning reading instruction, pupils should learn to read words which have rather through consistency between symbol

and sound. Pupils may then learn to read sentences in which words follow a specific pattern in pronounciation and spelling. Thus, the teacher might guide pupils in learning to read sentences containing the following words:

man fan Dan pan tan

ban can Nan ran van

Or, pupils in beginning reading could learn to read words such as the following in sentences:

bet net pet vet

met let set wet

It is difficult, of course, to write sentences with involved words following a pattern such as in the above named "man" family or "bet" family of words. This approach in the teaching of reading has been acceptable by some teachers. However, in the curriculum area of spelling, pupils in many units of study, learn to spell words where patterns are important. Thus, pupils are learning the structure of words such as in the following set where the initial consonant can be changed and a new word results: pat, rat, fat, cat, bat, hat, Nat, and sat.

There are advantages that linguistic approaches in the teaching of reading emphasize. These implications may also hold true for spelling. Among others, the advantages include the following:

1. Pupils can be aided in reading instruction by noticing how selected words pattern rather consistently between symbol and sound.
2. Learners develop understandings pertaining to structure of related words following a general or specific pattern.
3. Pupils may learn to identify new words when thinking of related patterns.
4. Learners develop a positive approach in identifying new words when

viewing structure or pattern of words.

Disadvantages in using linguistic approaches in the teaching of reading might be the following:

1. Monotonous reading activities may be experienced by pupils, especially in beginning teaching-learning situations.
2. There might be a lack of relationship in terms of how pupils speak using functional sentences as compared to reading content in begining reading using selected linguistic approaches.
3. Many words are spelled in an irregular manner in the English language and do not pattern well, such as "my", "sigh", "I", and "lye". These words contain the long "i" sound.

In using linguistic approaches in the teaching of reading, pupils encounter more of irregularly spelled words as they progress through the elementary school years. There also are irregularly spelled words which follow a pattern, such as "blight", "flight", "might", "plight", "sight", and "night".

Specific Objectives and Reading

Selected teachers, supervisors, and administrators advocate the use of specific objectives in the teaching of reading. These objectives are written in a precise manner. It is possible to measure if pupils have achieved specific objectives after instruction. Through observation, as one method of appraisal, the teacher can evaluate if pupils have or have not achieved the desired ends. Specific objectives must be selected carefully, prior to instruction, by those involved in teaching pupils. Thus, relevancy is an important concept to emphasize in selecting specific objectives for pupils to achieve.

The following are examples of specific objectives which pupils may achieve on their own unique achievement level:

1. The pupil will voluntarily read a library book and be able to answer three out of four questions correctly in evaluating comprehension.
2. The learner will pronounce correctly 95% of words encountered in reading a selection from the basal reader.
3. Reading a story of his/her own choosing, the pupil will state the main idea in the selection.
4. Having identified a problem in any curriculum area, the pupil will select five reference sources to gain a relevant solution.
5. The pupil will present at least three generalizations related to content read from a self-selected library book.
6. The learner will analyze a selection in reading by identifying three opinions given by the writer.
7. After completing the reading assignment, pupils will assess content in terms of presenting two accurate statements and two inaccurate statements.
8. The learner will tell a story pertaining to content read using appropriate sequence of sentences.
9. Following the reading of content in social studies, the pupil will give five facts contained in the selection.
10. Having read content pertaining to five story problems in mathematics, the pupil will tell in his/her own words information needed to provide viable solutions.

It is important for teachers to write significant objectives when specificity is important. Too frequently, specific objectives are written

which can be stated quickly and may then represent irrelevant learnings. Each objective in reading must be evaluated thoroughly in terms of acceptable standards.

Determining Reading Levels

One of the most important problems facing teachers of reading is to determine reading levels of individual pupils. Once this has been accomplished, the teacher has a further responsibility in finding materials which are beneficial to each individual. How can the teacher determine present reading levels of each pupil in the class setting?

1. The school may use standardized achievement tests to determine reading levels of pupils. These tests need to be assessed in terms of being valid and reliable. Grade equivalent test results from standardized tests may provide guidance to teachers in determining reading levels of learners on an individual basis.
2. The teacher may mark off approximately 100 running words in a basal textbook. The content has not been read previously by the pupil. The learner orally reads the selection to the teacher. Generally, pupils should pronounce 95 to 98 percent of the words correctly, if the involved book has content on the instructional level of the learner. The teacher also must select, with great care, four questions covering the selection to be read by pupils. Each pupil basically should be able to answer correctly three out of the four questions to assess comprehension in reading.

The figures given pertaining to correct word prounUnciation as well as reading comprehension are approximate. If pupils, for example, pronounce 75% of the words correctly in a selection, comprehension will suffer.

Thus, the book being considered is not on the instructional level of individual pupils. Or, if a pupil continually pronounces all words correctly without previous practice and can continually respond correctly to all relevant questions asked to assess comprehension, the book being considered will generally be too easy for the learner. The textbook might then be considered to be on the recreational level of reading. There is no room for growth in recognizing new words in reading on the part of individual pupils if, without previous practice, the child can pronounce 100 percent of the words correctly. Thus, in a quality reading program, there is room in each lesson for pupils to learn to identify a few new words as well as be challenged in the area of comprehension.

The teacher then has an important responsibility in determining reading levels of individual pupils. Appropriate materials must be obtained to assist each pupil in achieving optimally in reading.

Evaluating Reading Achievement

In assessing pupil achievement in reading, teachers need to ask themselves, among others, the following questions:

1. Did I guide each child in learning to read to his or her highest potential?
2. Were reading materials provided for each child's own unique level of achievement?
3. Did pupils engage in more independent reading than formerly?
4. Were pupils guided in developing proficiency in word attack skills so that comprehension of content was at an optimal level?
5. Did it appear that pupils enjoyed learning activities involving reading?

6. Were pupils developing optimal skills in reading for a variety of purposes?
7. Did learners have ample opportunities to assess their own achievement in reading?
8. Were pupils permitted to make an adequate number of choices in terms of selections to be read?
9. Did each child achieve stated objectives in reading instruction?
10. Were attitudinal objectives emphasized adequately as well as skills and understandings objectives in teaching-learning situations?
11. Did pupils develop appropriate appreciations toward quality literature in the reading curriculum?
12. Were pupil difficulties in reading diagnosed adequately?
13. Was remedial reading instruction emphasized adequately for needy learners?
14. Did I attempt to determine reading levels of each pupil?
15. Were appropriate learning activities selected to provide for individual differences?
16. Did I use valid eveluation techniques in assessing learner achievement?
17. If pupils did not achieve desired objectives, did I attempt to determine causes for this happening to remedy identified deficiencies?

In Summary

There are many innovations in the teaching of reading. Teachers, principals, and supervisors must become thoroughly familiar with new methods of teaching. New approaches in teaching reading should be evaluated thoroughly before being introduced in an elementary school. Objectives in reading must be carefully selected for pupils to achieve. Learning activities to achieve

desired ends, as well as appraisal procedures to evaluate achievement, need to provide for individual differences among learners.

THE INTEGRATED READING CURRICULUM

Considerable debate has been in evidence pertaining to how reading should be taught. During the 1960's and 1970's, the debate centered around approaches to the teaching of reading. The approaches included the use of individualized reading, basal readers, language experience methods, the Initial Teaching Alphabet (ITA), linguistic procedures, as well as programmed textbooks.

During the 1980's, behaviorism as a psychology of learning has been strongly advocated. With behaviorism, the following are in evidence:

1. precise, measurably stated objectives for students to achieve.
2. state mandated objectives for teachers to stress in teaching students.
3. state wide testing to determine the extent to which students are achieving the precise goals.
4. the use of standardized tests (norm referenced) to measure learner progress in reading.
5. instructional management systems (IMS) developed on the local district level. IMS plans contain behaviorally stated objectives. After instruction, the teacher can measure if a student has/has not achieved the specific goal.

The New Debate in Reading

With IMS and state mandated testing, emphasis is placed upon students achieving precise, measurably stated objectives. The tests within the IMS or state mandated testing are to be valid. The test items then measure what has been taught by the reading teacher to assist students to attain the precise ends. If a first grade teacher has ninety objectives in reading for learners to achieve, much emphasis in ongoing lessons and units will focus on students achieving the stated objectives. Each objective is highly specific, such as the student will underline the "fr" sound correctly on a worksheet in ten words pronounced by the teacher. With ninety precise objectives for student attainment in a school year, much drill and practice can be in evidence. There may be little time left over for enjoyment of reading. The measurably stated objectives have fragmented the act of reading into developing specific skills in phonics, syllabication, and structural analysis. Reading orally and silently to comprehend worthwhile subject matter may be minimized.

The act of reading is holistic and involves acquisition of facts, concepts, and generalizations. Relationship of words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs must be perceived by students. Comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading

instruction. Subject matter may be understood through reading for a variety of reasons or purposes. These reasons or purposes include reading for facts, sequence of ideas, main ideas, and generalizations. Additional comprehension skills involve critical reading, creative reading, reading to solve problems, as well as recreational reading. Even with all of the above purposes or reasons for reading content, subject matter should not be divided into isolated, fragmented parts. Rather the whole or gestalt of content read is vital. Content is related and does not occur in fragments or pieces.

With IMS and state mandated testing, too frequently reading becomes a means of appraising the achievement of students in acquiring word recognition skills (phonics, syllabication, and structural analysis), as well as diverse comprehension abilities. These skills and abilities are measured very frequently in isolation from the actual act of reading.

The writer would recommend that school systems and teachers of reading emphasize increasingly so, the tenets of individualized reading. Advocates of individualized reading believe that each person is at a different level of achievement compared to others in the classroom. Library books are utilized as reading materials. Learners

individually select their own sequential library books to read. Ideally, each reads at his/her optimal rate of speed. Library books chosen by a student are of personal interest and purpose. Each book selected is on the reading level of understanding of the chooser. After the completion of reading a library book, the student needs to have a conference with the reading teacher to check comprehension, attitude, and oral reading abilities. The teacher needs to know the content of library books read by students in order to have a quality conference.

Individualized reading advocates believe that

1. the act of reading is holistic and not fragmented. The entire library book is read by a student, prior to having a conference with the reading teacher.

2. students should select reading materials within a flexible framework. The learner must do the reading. The teacher is a stimulator and guide for students in reading. He/she, however, does not choose reading materials for students. The only exception would be if a student is unable to select a library book to read. If this should be the case, the teacher must select an appropriate book for the student to read.

3. the student is heavily involved in appraising his/her reading performance. To appraise comprehension in reading a library book, open ended discussions are in evidence. To evaluate word recognition through oral reading, the learner selects the section within the conference framework.

Individualized reading is quite opposite of the measurably stated objectives movement. The former is holistic, the latter tends to be fragmented. The reading

curriculum would benefit from being holistic in that students actually read and engage in much reading. A primary goal of reading instruction should be to develop attitudes of appreciation and interest within students to read. Each student should then have a greater intrinsic desire in wanting to read. These attitudes of appreciation and interest should motivate learners to increase their desire to read.

Further Goals in the Teaching of Reading

Holistic means of assisting students in reading stressed within the framework of individualized reading philosophies may also be emphasized with the utilization of basal readers. With carefully chosen, quality basal readers, students must have ample opportunities to read and enjoy the content. If IMS is utilized, time for reading instruction becomes fragmented. Learners then achieve precise, measurable objectives. The specific objectives may be totally unrelated to each other. There may be so many precise goals to attain that little time is left for the actual reading in depth of selected stories in the basal reader. Students learn to read by reading. Isolated skills may be measurable, but can students apply what has been learned? The major objective in reading is to develop

quality attitudes which encourage doing more reading on the part of each student.

In a holistic plan in the teaching of reading, students learn to identify new words when they read subject matter. In contextual situations, many new words are recognized by the learner. The teacher or a good reader can give assistance to those students who cannot identify a word while in the actual act of reading. In a stimulating environment, rich with reading materials, students locate content of personal interest. Interest in reading can hurdle many difficulties in word recognition and identification problems. To be sure, selected new words may need to be printed, neatly and legibly, on the chalkboard prior to the actual act of reading. However, these new words must be integrated into a contextual situation involving the actual act of reading.

With measurable stated goals, too frequently the emphasis has been on students learning isolated phonics sounds. Better it would be if each student learns phonics generalizations while reading content. When reading content from library books and textbooks, students may achieve many goals pertaining to phoeneme-grapheme relationships. Becoming a proficient reader is a must in the teaching of reading rather than emphasizing lesson after lesson of

phonics instruction. While reading content, students develop and perceive patterns in sound-symbol relationships.

Students should be active participants in learning. Too frequently, passivity is inherent within learners. Teachers raise questions for students to answer pertaining to content read. Rather active learners should do the asking of questions. They tend to see gaps in knowledge and desire to have these deficiencies minimized. With quality questions raised, answers can be generated. Purpose for learning is involved when students identify relevant questions and problems. Intrinsically, a desire is there to secure needed information. Basal reader content, as well as other reference sources, may be utilized to secure needed information. Active involvement of students is preferable to passive recipients in the classroom.

To achieve higher levels of cognition, students need to bring meaning to subject matter. Critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem solving emphasize learners determining and clarifying content read. Traditionally, the perception has been that students passively acquire meaning from subject matter read. Content in the basal reader then moves from the textbook to the student, if the latter secures meaning from what the author has written. Rather, the learner with his/her background experiences should bring

understanding and interpretation to facts, concepts, and generalizations read.

In Closing

A fragmented reading curriculum emphasizes isolated measurably stated objectives for students to attain. Rather, reading emphasizes students bringing meaning to subject matter read. Reading involves word recognition and comprehension skills. However, skills must be secured and utilized within the framework of quality holistic reading experiences.

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Oral Communication and the Curriculum

A basic, in addition to the three r's (reading, writing, and arithmetic), is oral communication. Much of subject matter and opinions communicated is done orally. Within the framework of the three r's, oral communication is continually in evidence and necessary. Thus, in reading, writing, and arithmetic, ideas are discussed, problems are identified, and conclusions are emphasized orally. In society, opinions, facts, concepts, generalizations, and main ideas are elaborated upon. It almost appears as if oral communication permeates whatever transpires between and among persons in school and in society.

Since oral communication is a basic in the curriculum, which objectives, learning experiences, and appraisal procedures are worthwhile to emphasize?

Objectives in Oral Communication

To develop student proficiency in oral communication, objectives need to be carefully identified. Each end must be relevant, significant, and useful to the learner. Trivia needs to be weeded out of the curriculum. Individual differences among slow, average, and fast achievers must be respected. No two students should be held to the same level of attainment. Each student has utmost value and needs assistance to achieve as much as possible. Objectives

should be stated at an optimal level at which a student can be successful in learning. The ends then should not stress goals whereby students attain failure in oral communication. Nor should the objectives be so relaxed in that a lack of challenge in learning is in evidence. The language arts teacher needs to preassess and appraise where each student is presently achieving in oral communication. Once the ends have been stated, a stimulating learning environment needs to be in evidence so that each student can achieve ongoing objectives.

Objectives also need to emphasize meaningful content. A learner then must attach meaning to goals being achieved. Rote learning or memorization make for lower cognitive levels of objectives. Facts are the building blocks for students to move on to higher levels of thinking. Students need to comprehend and attach meaning to facts inherent in oral communication. From the cognitive level of comprehension, students need to use what has been learned. Applying what has been acquired is then significant. What is learned in oral communication has utilitarian values in society. School and society should not be separated, but be integrated entities. It is important also for students to be able to analyze or think critically about subject matter in oral communication. Critical thinking involves separating facts from opinions, fantasy

from reality, accurate from inaccurate statements, and to make contrasts and comparisons. Creative thinking is a further significant goal in emphasizing meaningful learnings. Novel, unique ideas are significant in creative thinking. New ideas are needed in society to change, modify, and improve the societal arena. Objectives in problem solving truly stress integrating school and society. In society, problems abound. The problems need solutions. Evaluating the quality of each solution is necessary. Objectives then should emphasize what is meaningful to the learner. Content becomes personally relevant and understandable when it possesses the quality of meaning.

Thirdly, objectives should stress securing the interests of students in oral communication. Interest of students is a powerful factor in learning. With interest, the student and the subject matter to be learned become integrated, and not separate entities. Interest tends to provide its very own effort in learning. Interest within learners is established to achieve worthwhile learnings and attain desired objectives. Interest is not trivia or random, but focuses upon goal attainment. Relevant subject matter to be acquired is emphasized when interest becomes a dominant criterion in having students learn and achieve. A very excellent guideline, among others, for the teacher to utilize is to encourage

student interest in learning. Objectives in oral communication must reflect the concept of learner interest in the curriculum.

Objectives in oral communication need to emphasize purpose in learning. Reasons then exist for having students achieve objectives. The student tends to accept what is purposeful. A lack of purpose means energy levels are low for learning. Increased purpose for learning emphasizes the student perceiving more reasons for participating in ongoing units of study. Purposes established in oral communication should be clear and attainable for each student. The purposes must be acceptable. Hopefully, from within or intrinsically, the student will perceive reasons to achieve worthwhile goals of instruction.

Fifthly, goals in oral communication should reflect affective ends. Positive attitudes then need to be developed by students. These feelings assist students to acquire subject matter learnings. Quality attitudes toward the self and others are vital. Greater achievement in oral communication is possible if students feel competent and have a desire to learn. Vital affective goals in speaking need identification. Learning activities for students to attain the chosen ends should be in evidence and implemented. Validity in evaluation procedures should follow. The language arts teacher needs to know how well students are achieving in

oral communication. It is essential for the teacher to know sequential progress of each student. Only then can ordered objectives be stressed in ongoing lessons and units.

Philosophy of Teaching Oral Communication

Philosophy provides guidance and direction in teachers selecting objectives, learning activities, and appraisal procedures. Diverse philosophies will now be discussed to assist teachers in oral communication curriculum development.

The experimentalist believes that one can know experiences only, in life. One then cannot know the real world as it truly is. Nor, can one know ideas alone, of what actually is and exists. Since in experimentalism the person can only know experiences, change in school and in society is in emphasis. With change, problems come into existence. These problems need clarity and identification. After the problem is adequately delimited, data or information may be gathered to secure answers to the problem. The data provides a hypothesis in answer to the problem. The hypothesis is tentative and subject to testing. The hypothesis is then subject to revision. The flexible steps of problem solving involve much oral communication, especially since committee endeavors are recommended by experimentalists. Why? In society, committees are at work to solve problems. All in society are involved in working on diverse committees at different

times. Group decision making is at the heart of experimentalism, as a philosophy of education and of life. Within committees, diverse kinds of speaking activities are in evidence. Experimentalists have much to offer in guiding students to develop proficiently in interacting well orally with others. School and society must not be separate, but integrated entities. Problems can be identified by any student in each of the different curriculum areas. Solutions to each problem must be in the offing.

As a second philosophy of education, realism has much to offer the language arts teacher. The realist tends to believe in whole or part that one can know the real world as it truly is. The real world is there independent of the observer. Since the real world can be known as it truly is, the specific of knowledge is knowable. Precise, measurable stated objectives should be utilized in teaching and learning. After instruction, it can be determined if a student has or has not attained the precise end. Independent of any observer and in measurable terms, one can know if a student has or has not attained the precise end. It is measurable to determine the number of ends achieved by any one learner if the objectives are stated with precision and in observable terms.

Speaking activities for students may emphasize precise objectives to attain. These measurable ends may be written prior to instruction.

The objectives should then be announced to students prior to teaching-learning situations being implemented involving oral communication. Diverse kinds of oral expression experiences may be practiced by students such as making of introductions, impromptu speeches, discussions, after dinner speeches, and advertising a product. After the learning opportunities have been completed, the language arts teacher measures if a student has or has not attained the precise end. The objectives must be clearly stated. After instruction, according to realists, it must be possible to determine if the ends have been attained by students. Guesswork must be eliminated in ascertaining if a student has been successful in goal attainment.

A third philosophy, namely idealism, has much to recommend itself in terms of developing teaching strategies in oral communication. Idealism emphasizes that one can only know ideas about phenomena. One then cannot know in and of themselves how objects truly are in their natural environment. The idea centered idealist stresses a subject centered curriculum. Subject matter, not an activity centered method of teaching, is important to emphasize in ongoing learning situations.

Subject matter, in all its significance and vitality, can be stressed in oral communication. Each student then must be assisted to possess accurate, comprehensive subject matter content in speaking

activities in the language arts. Idealists tend to emphasize that students achieve generalizations based on facts. However, the generalizations are more salient than the facts. Therefore, idealists would recommend that students be guided to achieve broad generalizations. These broad ideas can be checked in terms of accuracy. They must be comprehensive to include specific facts.

Idealists also tend to stress ideals. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) emphasized the Categorical Imperative. The Categorical Imperative, as emphasized by Kant, an idealist, states that one should act and behave in a way that those deeds become universal for all to live by and accept. Certainly, speaking activities can emphasize in discussion settings how to react in order that universal principles would be achieved.

Existentialism, as a fourth philosophy in the oral communications curriculum, stresses the individual in the making of choices and decisions. Life consists then of making awesome choices in an absurd environment. The social and natural environment represents anything but a rational way of life. To be human means to make choices and decisions. If others are permitted to choose for the self, the latter no longer is human. The chooser accepts the consequences of each decision made. Others are not blamed for the results of a choice. The chooser then cannot blame others for decisions made.

Oral Communication

In oral communication, discussions, oral reports, debates, and dramatic activities, existentialism can be emphasized. Content in the speaking activities may well emphasize paradoxes in life. Clearcut answers do not exist in terms of resolving dilemmas. One must still choose and make decisions within the absurdity of life's situations. Thus, the subject matter of oral communication can definitely emphasize existential thinking.

What is to be learned by the student can also stress existentialism. Thus, students may select sequential tasks to complete and omit in the use of learning centers. Teacher-student planning of what the latter is to learn can also be stressed, outside the framework of learning centers. However, adequate input in the curriculum must be in the offing from students. Otherwise, learners cannot be involved in the making of choices and decisions, as advocated by existentialists. Content in the curriculum should emphasize values and the clarification of values. To an existentialist, knowledge is subjective, not objective, to the individual making the choices and decisions. Each initiative by the involved person must have a moral basis.

In Closing

The writer has discussed a psychological and philosophical basis to utilize in selecting objectives for students to achieve in oral

communication. Criteria to use in selecting objectives would be the following:

1. individual differences need adequate provision.
2. content should make sense and be meaningful.
3. the interests of learners need to be secured for satisfaction to occur in learning.
4. students need to perceive purpose in learning.
5. quality attitudes need to be developed within students.

The above are excellent criteria for language arts teachers to emphasize in selecting goals for student attainment.

The writer also discussed a philosophical basis for making decisions pertaining to oral communication objectives. These include experimentalism, realism, idealism, and existentialism. From a study of philosophy of education, the writer recommends using the following philosophical strands:

1. problem solving approaches to acquire vital subject matter and methods to increase student skills in oral communication.
2. precise objectives and observable results from student achievement. Creative and critical thinking must not be hindered in the process.
3. academic content stressing universal knowledge, as advocated by idealists.
4. students learning to make choices and decisions, as recommended by existentialism.

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SPELLING IN THE CURRICULUM

Correct spelling of words needs adequate emphasis in teaching-learning situations. Why? Proficient communication is aided when written or typed content contains words which are correctly spelled. A quality language arts curriculum then must place thorough emphasis in aiding students to spell words correctly.

Criteria for a Quality Spelling Program

Whatever decisions are made in life, standards or criteria are utilized. In teaching and learning situations, the teacher needs to:

1. select worthwhile goals for students to attain. Trivia must be omitted in the curriculum. In spelling, the words students are to master need to be significant presently, as well as in the future. There is much for each to learn. It behooves the instructor to choose carefully those words for learners to spell correctly which are salient and relevant.

2. emphasize the concept of balance in the curriculum. Thus, in spelling pupils need to develop vital understandings, as well as skills and attitudes. All three kinds of objectives need to be stressed. Understanding goals are not adequate in and of themselves, such as learners acquiring facts, concepts, and generalizations related directly to definitions or meanings of spelling words. Rather, skills (utilizing the newly mastered spelling words in functional writing) and attitudes (positive feelings in wanting to learn to spell words correctly) are equally significant goals. Skills then pertain to the use of what has been achieved within the framework of understanding goals. Attitudes reveal a desire to increase the levels of understanding and skills.

3. guide pupils to perceive purpose or reasons for mastering a given set of spelling words. When inductive methods are utilized, the teacher guides students in discovering reasons for learning to spell selected words accurately. With a deductive method, the language arts instructor explains reasons as to why students need to learn to spell words correctly within a spelling unit. In using extrinsic rewards to aid students to perceive purpose in spelling, awards are announced ahead of time as to the number of words a learner needs to spell correctly in order to receive a prize, a badge, or certificate for achievement. Exhortation may also be used by the teacher to promote perceived purpose. Thus, the teacher stresses the importance of learning to spell words correctly. However, reasons are not given. With exhortation the teacher could say, "It's very important for you to learn to spell these words correctly in unit one in our spelling textbook."

The teacher needs to utilize the four above neamed means of guiding students to perceive purpose early in a spelling unit as well as frequently.

Norton[1] wrote:

> Many current articles deal with the writing crisis in American schools. Poor spelling is often cited as a major problem with children's writing. The school program must help students learn to spell the words they need to know; provide instruction in reliable spelling generalizations; develop an understanding of word meanings and vocabulary; equip the speller with more than one strategy for spelling-word attack; incorporate spelling into all areas of the curriculum; proceed from sound diagnostic evaluation; and provide for the development of motivation, positive student attitudes and sound habits for studying spelling and proofreading.
>
> Diagnostic approaches to spelling instruction stress the placement of students on appropriate spelling instructional levels. In addition to instructional placement, the diagnostic teacher also analyzes the types of errors a child makes in writing. This information is used to individualize the spelling program for each child. Informal tests for spelling placement, spelling generalizations, and error analysis can be developed by the classroom teacher.
>
> Spelling words are selected according to several different criteria. The frequency-of-use approach stresses that spelling instruction should be based on the words that are the most frequently used. Consequently, it is believed that words most frequently used in writing should be taught first, words commonly used by children in a specific grade should be taught in that grade, and words needed in other content areas should be taught in the appropriate grade. Another quite different selection criterion emphasizes the phonic regularity of words. The words selected for this approach would follow a consistent spelling pattern. Some linguists and psycholinguists also stress the consistency of spelling patterns in words of similar meanings. Thus, spelling instruction should allow students to compare, contrast, and categorize words according to root words, word origins, and similarities in structural patterns.
>
> Several techniques have proven valuable in a developmental approach to spelling instruction. The corrected-test method allows immediate feedback, and liberates students from the systematic study of words already mastered. The self-study method allows students to master their own individualized spelling words. An inductive approach to teaching spelling generalizations allows students to discover and use the reliable spelling generalizations.
>
> Remedial spelling approaches have been developed for the more disabled speller. The Fernald approach has been useful with learning disabled children. In this multisensory method, the child looks at the word, traces the word, then writes the word without looking at it. Spelling games are useful for reinforcing and motivating the remedial spelling student. Spelling should not, however, be taught as an isolated subject. Students, whether remedial, regular developmental, or gifted, require many opportunities to use spelling in meaningful situations.

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[1]Donna E. Norton, The Effective Teaching of Language Arts. Second ed. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1985, pages 208-210.

4. choose a variety of interesting learning activities for students. To achieve interest within learners, diverse activities need to be in the offing. The experiences may include

(a) activities contained in spelling textbooks, workbooks, and worksheets.

(b) Commercial and teacher developed games.

(c) crossword puzzles in which the list being studied in spelling provides answers for the vertical and horizontal lines.

(d) computerized drill, practice, and games.

(e) spelling bees where competition is wholesome and educational.

(f) purposeful, practical experiences including writing friendly and business letters, announcements, plays, poems, stories, and skits.

(g) pantomimes, creative dramatics, and formal dramatizations.

5. evaluate student achievement comprehensively. Diverse procedures need to be utilized to appraise learner progress. The evaluation procedures may include

(a) teacher developed tests.

(b) standardized tests.

(c) learner abilities to spell words correctly within the framework of functional writing situations.

(d) weekly results from students being tested on lists of words contained in spelling textbooks being utilized in the classroom.

6. assist students to utilize correct spelling of words. Students who utilize what has been learned are less likely to forget subject matter acquired. The teacher needs to provide situations in which pupils may use that which has been learned.

Retention in learning is a perennial problem. Human beings feel and believe that an inadequate amount of content has been retained. Retaining the correct spelling of words is no exception. Teachers need to think of means and methods of helping students remember understandings and skills achieved.

Utilitarian theorists believe that useful spelling words need to be mastered by students. If students learn to spell words correctly which have been identified as being functional, errors in spelling would decline greatly. With utilitarian words mastered by students in spelling, learners might then

study what is useful. What is useful will be utilized frequently. That which is used tends not to be forgotten.

Burns and Broman[2] wrote:

> Some spelling programs are based on the theory of social utility; that is, words are selected on the basis of their importance in the different spelling activities of life. There are a number of investigations about spelling vocabulary, but perhaps the most important one is by Ernest Horn. He studied letters of bankers, excuses written to teachers by parents, minutes of organizations and committee reports, letters of application and recommendation, the works of well-known authors, letters written in magazines and newspapers, personal letters, business letters—a total of 5 million words and 36,000 different words. From this, the most important 10,000 words were selected as basic words, according to these criteria:
>
> 1. The total frequency with which the word was used in writing
> 2. The commonness with which the word was used by everyone, regardless of sex, vocation, geographical location, educational level, or economic status
> 3. The spread of the word's use in different kinds of writing
> 4. The cruciality of the word as evidenced by the severity of the penalty attached to its misspelling
> 5. The probable permanency of the word's use
> 6. The desirability of the word as determined by the quality of the writing in which it was used.
>
> Horn suggested three criteria for introducing these basic words in the spelling program:
>
> The most important words should be introduced in the beginning grades and those of lesser importance in the later grades.
> The simplest words should be introduced in the beginning grades and the more difficult words in the later grades.
> Those words that are used often or needed in the curriculum activities of children should be introduced when appropriate.

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[2]Paul C. Burns and Betty L. Broman, The Language Arts in Childhood Education. Fifth ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1983, pages 242 and 243.

7. guide students to perceive patterns in the correct spelling of words. There are numerous sets or word families which follow a pattern. For example, first grade pupils need to learn to spell correctly the following: ban, can, fan, man, pan, van, tan, and ran. With a change in the initial consonant of each of the above named words, a new word emerges. Another, pattern of words for young learners to master in spelling include bat, cat, hat, mat, pat, rat, and sat. Inductively (by discovery) and deductively (through meaningful explanations) pupils need to observe that selected English words form a pattern in spelling. Even the following irregularly spelled words—rough, cough, through, and thought follow a pattern emphasized in the "ough" letters. Linguists are strong advocates of students noticing pattern which assists in spelling words correctly. Young pupils should study words which pattern in phoneme (sound)—grapheme (symbol) relationships contained in a family such as bet, met, set, let, yet, and get. In sequence, as learners progress through the diverse grade levels, words containing less of consistency between phonemes and graphemes can be emphasized such as bake, cake, fake, make, rake, and sake. Each of these words contain a silent "e" ending and might well be appropriate, as an example, for second graders. On the third grade, students might learn to spell words which gradually contain less relationship between phonemes and graphemes. These include my, pie, sigh, island, aisle, rye, and ride. Each of the above named words contains a long $\bar{I}$ sound as a linguistic element. As a final example, sixth grades might well learn to spell words which pattern with the vowel sound as in the word blue. The letters "ue" in sound pattern with to, too, two, rheumetism, flu, new, and soon. There are

seventeen diverse ways to spell the same sound as represented by the letters "ue" in the word blue.

Stewig[3] wrote:

> Having children experience patterns in spelling is not the complete task, however. As they progress through the spelling program, they must be exposed to the idea that in addition to patterns, there are exceptions. The danger in any generalization is that the pattern may be overextended or applied to words for which it is inappropriate. Much inaccurate spelling results from overzealous application of generalizations. The child who spells bizzy (for busy), honer (for honor), and ankshus (for anxious) is only trying to apply what he or she has learned.
>
> Trying to explain the logic behind some of these exceptions is largely futile; many exceptions must simply be learned on a rote basis. For example, children are often taught the pattern: When words begin with an initial /k/ sound, they are spelled with the letter K when the letters i or e follow, and are spelled with the letter C in all other cases. The alert child will soon notice, however, that there are exceptions. In such words as chaos, character, and chorus, the initial ch spelling is necessary to represent the initial /k/ sound. This is because such words are borrowings from the original Greek spelling, with the ch- retained, instead of modified to fit the more general English system (Corcoran, 1970). Does this make sense? Of course not, if one is searching for logic in a system that developed in piecemeal fashion. The child simply has to learn that there are exceptions to the system. While it would be more convenient for everyone concerned if some of these obscure borrowings were changed in written form to conform to the system, this is unlikely. Therefore, the onus of learning not only the system but also the exceptions falls on the child. An unfair requirement? Probably, but one which is unlikely to be changed! The teacher's job is, therefore, to make the learning of the system as palatable as possible.

8. assist students to develop effective ways in learning to spell words correctly.

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[3]John Warren Stewig, Exploring Language Arts in the Elementary Classroom. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983, page 336.

Petty[4], et.al. wrote:

> The basic goal in spelling instruction is to teach children to spell the words they use in their writing. This means the writing they do in school and the writing they will do after their school years. Of course it is impossible to determine all of the words any person may need to spell in a lifetime, but everyone should learn to spell the words that are most frequently written. It is also important to encourage children's increasing awareness of the structure of their language and how aspects of this structure relate to spelling specific words. Finally, a positive attitude toward spelling correctly and habits which support this attitude need to be developed.
>
> Since spelling requires putting into written form words that are familiar from speaking, reading, and listening, two important abilities are needed. One of these is the ability to recall how words look—the words that the child has studied and those that have frequently appeared in his or her reading. The other basic ability is that of associating letters and patterns of letters with specific sounds. These two abilities become closely allied in the spelling efforts of most children, and both are influenced by the children's understanding of syntactic and morphemic aspects of the language.
>
> A good speller naturally must know the letters of the alphabet and how to write them in both lowercase and uppercase forms. He or she should know how to alphabetize words and how to use this knowledge to find the spellings of words in dictionaries and glossaries. He or she should be able to pronounce words clearly and accurately and to use a dictionary, including its diacritical markings and key words, as well as phonetic and structural aids to help with pronounciations.

Good spellers, no doubt, have developed quality methods in learning to spell words accurately. Those students doing poorly in spelling may need to develop methodologies which work in spelling words correctly. Which methodology might the teacher assist students in acquiring?

(a) each student needs to look at a word carefully prior to studying its spelling. The sense of sight must be emphasized so that configuration clues might be utilized by the learner. A student cannot master a set of words in spelling unless he/she attends carefully to each new word. Some words are longer than others. Selected words are taller or shorter as far as individual letters within a word are concerned. Thus, distinguishing features must be observed prior to learning to spell that word.

(b) students individually need to be able to pronounce each word correctly. Incorrect pronunciation of words can well make for spell-

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[4]Walter T. Petty et.al. Experiences in Language. Fourth ed. Newton, Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1985, page 250.

ing errors. Also students need to listen to the sounds within a word to associate sounds with symbols. Irregularities in spelling need to be noticed by the student. A learner can over generalize on the use of phonics. Phonetic analysis may also not be utilized adequately by the student in learning accurate word spellings.

(c) the involved student may now close his/her eyes and attempt to see the new word being studied. The mental image is then checked against the correct spelling of the word in print.

(d) students individually may now write the new spelling word from memory. The written word needs to be checked against the accurately printed word being studied.

(e) the student should now write the new word in isolation as well as within sentences to show mastery.

9. provide a quality learning environment to develop positive attitudes within students. Quality feelings toward any curriculum area, including spelling, assists learners to achieve more optimally. Pupils need to feel that spelling words correctly is important in communicating ideas in writing. Appropriate courtesy and manners are also expressed when words are accurately spelled. The receiver of written content develops certain impressions of a writer if words are spelled correctly or incorrectly. When letters of application for a position or job application forms are completed by an applicant, certainly, words that are misspelled will influence an employer.

How can a teacher then assist students to feel that spelling words correctly in writing is important?

(a) Pupils need to look at written products in which words are spelled incorrectly. Here nonexamples are used in teaching-learning situations. Students might then notice how effective communication is hindered through incorrect spelling of words.

(b) Learners need to receive responses to business and friendly letters written. Reasons exist for writing business or friendly letters. These reasons might include to order free or inexpensive materials for an ongoing unit being studied in the classroom A business letter then needs to be written. Correct spelling of words in the letter assists in communicating ideas. To correspond with friends, relatives, and acquaintances, friendly letters need composing by students. Politeness in writing and effective communication demands that words be accurately spelled.

Microcomputer Use in the Spelling Curriculum

With an increased number of microcomputers and software available in spelling, students might experience a relatively new kind of experience. There are selected philosophies that may be emphasized in microcomputer instruction.

Tutorial programs provide opportunities for pupils to experience new learnings in spelling. With proper debugging of the software, students may experience sequential learnings in spelling. Adequate opportunities in the program should be given to pupils to interact or respond to questions or multiple choice items contained in a program. A reward system must be in evidence which reinforces correct answers given by learners.

Kemp and Dayton[5] wrote:

> Tutorials attempt to emulate a human tutor. Instruction is provided via text or graphics on the screen. At appropriate points a question or problem is posed. If the student's response is correct, the computer moves on to the next block of instruction. If the response is incorrect the computer may recycle to the previous instruction or move to one of several sets of remedial instruction, depending upon the nature of the error.

Diagnostic and remediation programs are significant for selected pupils. The concept of diagnosis emphasizes the need to determine specifically which problems pupils experience in spelling. The following may cause difficulties for students in learning to spell words accurately:

1. words that do not follow a grapheme-phoneme relationship, e.g. one, two, rough, and high.
2. words that represent spelling demons, e.g. always (allways), occur (ocur), running (runing), and rabbit (rabit). Words in parenthesis stress incorrect spellings.
3. words that are easily mispronounced.
4. words that are homonyms, e.g. hear-here; their, there, they're; bear, bare; and wait, weight.
5. words that are heteronyms, e.g. subject (My favorite subject is geometry) and (Don't subject the child to hard work).

Quality software needs to pinpoint specific errors in spelling of a student. Remediation efforts must then follow.

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[5]Jerrold E. Kemp and Deane K. Dayton, Planning and Producing Instructional Media. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1985, page 246.

Di Stefano, Dole, and Marzano[6] wrote:

> Hagerty (1981) found that the majority of words third graders and fifth graders misspelled in writing were high frequency words that had little phoneme-grapheme representation, like "sed" for "said" and "becuz" for "because". Using the words that students misspell in writing, you can have students develop a student dictionary based on each individual's misspelled words.

Drill and practice are vital in spelling. Otherwise pupils may not retain the correct spelling of words. Forgetting can be quite rapid for many students. It behooves the teacher to assist pupils to remember that which has been learned by students. Transfer of learning is also important. If students, for example, have mastered the spelling of a list of words, they must reveal increasingly that the new words can be spelled correctly in functional, utilitarian writing situations.

Software emphasizing drill and practice must

1. relate to those words students need more help in to retain/remember their correct spelling.
2. emphasize relevance or usefulness in everyday writing situations.
3. provide for success in achievement.
4. indicate a need for reviewing the correct spelling of selected words.
5. reflect student interests and purposes.

Too frequently, drill and practice activities are boring to learners. A lack of challenge is involved in the routine and mundane. A sheer lack of interest may then follow. A meaningless curriculum is an end result. Students fail to achieve vital goals, as a consequence. Certainly learning activities invloving drill and practice should be stimulating to students so that sequential learning can follow.

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[6]Philip Di Stephano, Janice Dole, and Robert Marzano, Elementary Language Arts. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1984, page 149.

Dennis and Kansky[7] wrote:

> Associative learning, as required for success in a spelling competition, calls for the services of some kindly soul who will sit for hours pronouncing words and checking your spelling against that of the ruling lexicographer. You can claim success (learning) when spaced presentations of the pronunciation of sarcophagus (the stimulus) are met by your unerring verbal dissection s-a-r-c-o-p-h-a-g-u-s (the response). The procedure is known as drill. It's not a very exciting activity for your partner, so you might want to try shouting in order to ensure his or her consciousness.
>
> Textbooks and teachers are not the most effective resources for drills. Textbooks cannot respond with the flexibility needed to shape the student's learning. Teachers cannot give each individual student the time needed to fix all of the associations that are part of education. Using a teacher to carry out such a tedious, unrewarding task is as unforgivable as using a Ming vase as a paperweight.
>
> The computer has been shown to be an effective drillmaster in promoting associative learning. Students achieve mastery of such associations quickly and show high levels of retention. And for reasons that are anyone's guess, students appear to be highly motivated to engage in drill activity with a computer.

Games can be an enjoyable method of learning for students. The writer observed a teacher made game utilized in the classroom to challenge students to learn to spell words. A pupil would spin a spinner with the numerals one to five spaced congruently for the spinner to point to. For example, flipping the spinner with the finger, a student spins a value of three. Five piles of congruent cards are placed face down. Pile one has the easiest words while stack five has the most difficult words to spell. Piles one, two, and three are more complex than stack one and less complex than pile five, in a hierarchical manner. With the spinner pointed to number three, an opponent picks up a card from pile three turning it face up. The opponent pronounces the word to the involved student who must correctly spell orally or in writing the spelling word pronounced by the opponent in order to move three spaces forward on the game board. Each player takes his/her turn to cross the finish line.

[7] J. Richard Dennis and Robert J. Kansky, Instructional Computing. Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1984, page 15.

There are selected excellent programs for microcomputer utilization emphasizing the gaming approach. CompuCat Spell[8] is a game for pupils to play in the area of spelling. The following are inherent in the game:

1. rules are presented for two players to play at a time.
2. there are three different games in the above named software.
3. the involved students can select slow, average, or fast for the speed of the software presentation.
4. ten, twenty, thirty, or forty points can be earned for each question answered correctly.
5. the student must respond to a question on the screen before a "cat" jumps from block one to block ten. If the learner does not respond within this allotted time, he/she loses ten points.
6. extra bonus points can be earned in the game. This is indicated when a "cat" moves across the top of the screen. One extra bonus point frame has the following item:

   A pup is a:

   1. dug
   2. dig
   3. dog
   4. dag

The learner needs to type the correct numeral on the terminal to receive an extra point.

7. each student can receive a printout of results of the game played. The printout, among other items, contains the number of questions answered correctly, questions missed, and total questions answered. The printout also contains the correct answers to items missed by the involved student.
8. sound is available for reinforcement of correct responses given by students.
9. the manual contains a scope and sequence chart of content contained in the software, such as game one containing short and long vowel monosyllables; short and long vowels; synonyms, antonyms, and word meanings; as well as students choosing correct spelling of sound-spelled words.

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[8]CompuCat Spell. New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1985.

Computer managed instruction (CMI) can save much time in developing the spelling curriculum. One means in utilizing CMI is to permit the microcomputer to check the results of student achievement in spelling in

(a) pretests to ascertain where a student is presently in achievement.

(b) criterion checks to determine how well students are achieving goals as a unit progresses.

(c) post tests in measuring gains at the completion of a unit.

Test results of students may be stored and retrieved, as needed, in computer managed instruction. A printout of measurable objectives in spelling together with the related learning activities to achieve each goal may be sent home to parents. The printout would show which objectives a student has achieved and which goals need achieving. Parents' support may then be enlisted, as homework for the involved pupil, to assist their offspring in sequential goal attainment. The classroom teacher, the parents, and the pupil might then know which specific objectives in spelling the latter individually has attained and which are left to achieve.

Pertaining to storage and retrieval of information, Grossnickle[9], et.al. wrote:

> The power of a computer depends largely on two factors:
>
> 1. Its ability to store and retrieve large amounts of information quickly.
>
> 2. Its ability to make decisions.
>
> A high level of technical programming skill is required to take full advantage of the decision-making power of the computer. However, using relatively inexpensive software and with the basic technical knowledge, it is possible for a beginner to store and retrieve information.
>
> Information fed into a computer is usually lost when the computer is turned off, but with proper peripheral equipment, information can be stored on cassette or disk. Although a disk drive costs almost half as much as a computer, it is almost essential for efficient school use. Storage and retrieval are nearly instantaneous with a disk drive, and are far more time consuming with cassette.

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[9]Foster E. Grossnickle, et.al. Discovering Meanings in Elementary School Mathematics, Seventh ed. New York: Holt, Rinehartand Winston, 1983, page 202.

In Conclusion

There are selected criteria which teachers need to utilize in selecting objectives and learning activities in spelling. These include:

1. significant objectives need to be selected for pupils to achieve.
2. understandings, skills, and attitudinal goals need to be stressed in goal attainment for learners. Emphasizing only one of the above categories in teaching deemphasizes the concept of balance in the curriculum.
3. perceived purpose needs to be developed for learning.
4. a variety of activities and experiences must be in the offing in the spelling curriculum.
5. diverse procedures need to be utilized to assess learner progress.
6. students need to use the correct spelling of new words in functional writing situations.
7. patterns and irregularities need to be observed by students in spelling.
8. appropriate methodologies should be used by pupils in learning to spell words accurately.
9. positive attitudes toward spelling, as a curriculum area, need to be developed and maintained.

Microcomputer utilization has numerous objectives for pupils to attain. Thus, microcomputers may be used for

1. tutorial instruction.
2. diagnosis and remediation.
3. drill and practice.
4. the playing of games.
5. computer managed instruction purposes.

The spelling curriculum must reflect the interests, needs, and purposes of students. Each learner needs guidance to attain optimally in spelling.

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Motivation and the Learner in Reading

Motivation is a rather persistent problem in guiding students to read well. If a student lacks motivation, a low energy level will be available in learning to read. Through motivation, a learner is encouraged to achieve definite goals in reading. Persistence is there to aid students in goal attainment with adequately motivated behavior.

Causes and Effects Related to Motivation

Numerous causes can be listed which hinder student motivation in reading. Books that are not on the reading levels of students hinder these learners to achieve optimally. A book that is too complex to read makes for a lack of comprehension of ideas. Or, if the contents are too easy, challenge to read may well be lacking.

Teachers who fail to teach reading minimize the importance of student progress. Teachers need to develop readiness within learners prior to the latter engaging in the actual reading of content. Readiness activities need to be interesting. Otherwise, students' attention may be difficult to secure in an ongoing lesson or unit.

Outdated textbooks that show excessive wear lack appeal for students to read. Textbooks/trade books need to be

appealing to students. The appeal helps establish set within students to learn. The student and the reading materials must become integrated. Otherwise, the learner disassociates himself/herself from the reading experience. Motivation in reading then is lacking.

A stimulating room environment with bulletin board displays to encourage reading is important. Jackets from library books on a bulletin board may stimulate many to increase consumption of reading materials. Comfortable, attractive furniture in a reading area may well be a further stimulator to read an increased number of books.

Proper temperature readings with appropriate ventilation is necessary for quality comprehension to occur. The late A. H. Maslow, advocating humanism as a psychology of learning, stressed the importance of meeting needs of students in order that the latter can acquire self-actualization. At the apex, Maslow listed physiological needs which must be met by learners. These included appropriate temperature readings and ventilation, food, clothing, shelter, and water. Students lack motivation to learn if these needs are not met. Maslow further stressed students meet security, love and belonging,

and esteem needs. Self-actualization then becomes a possibility. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is known as a theory of motivation. Lower needs must be met before higher level needs become important. Thus, physiological needs generally must be met first before other needs in sequence become significant.

Why Motivation is Lacking

Numerous reasons are given for students lacking motivation. Frequently, teachers are blamed for learners not being motivated due to poor teaching methods. This may be one reason. Teachers need to feel challenge covering the subject matter being taught. Enthusiasm of teachers might be reflected within learners. Thus, a teacher who enthusiastically tells learners what he/she has read and demonstrates interest in reading content, as well as in teaching reading to each student, may well encourage the latter to read proficiently. Certainly, a teacher showing motivation in teaching students to read critically and creatively should have these reading skills reflected within learners. Higher levels of cognition, such as critical and creative reading, must be emphasized in the reading curriculum.

There are numerous other reasons for students lacking motivation in reading. A variety of reading materials, including textbooks, library books, and other print materials must be available for learners to provide for individual differences. It certainly is not motivating for learners if the subject matter read is too complex or excessively easy. Each student needs to be ready for reading specific subject matter. Readiness factors include having ample opportunities to see new words in print, attach meaning to each new word, have adequate background information, as well as have a purpose (reason) to read, prior to reading the involved subject matter.

Subject matter to be read should be of interest to students. A lack of interesting reading materials can make for inappropriate motivation. With interest in subject matter being read, students possess a high energy level for reading. Motivation is inherent when each student is interested in reading the involved subject matter.

Reading teachers must use a variety of methods in teaching students. To learn inductively on the part of students, the teacher needs to ask stimulating questions covering content read. Each question needs to be on the

understanding level of students. Questions for students need to lead to higher levels of thinking, such as the levels of analysis (separating facts from opinions, fantasy from reality, accurate from inaccurate content, as well as detecting bias, glittering generalities, and card stacking), synthesis (hypothesizing), and evaluation (appraising subject matter read in terms of quality criteria).

Deductive methods emphasize a teacher modeling behavior pertaining to analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Students then apply what has been learned pertaining to higher levels of cognition.

Problem solving methods should also be utilized. Here, students with teacher guidance identify a problem or broad question. Information is gathered through reading and the use of audiovisual materials. A hypothesis or answer to the problem or question should then be in evidence. The hypothesis is tested in action and revised if necessary. Problem solving methods are good to utilize when students elect real, life-like problems in reading pertaining to subject matter read. A variety of reading materials and nonreading activities assist in data gathering, as well as in checking hypotheses. Critical and creative thinking are

emphasized in true problem solving experiences. Problems identified are new to involved students. Challenge is involved in choosing learning opportunities to solve the identified problems. If the same methods are utilized continuously, students will tend to dislike reading.

Balance among cognitive, affective, and psychomotor objectives should be emphasized in teaching reading. A single domain of objectives, such as cognitive, is not adequate. The development of the intellect (cognition) is significant in the teaching of reading. Students then need to learn to achieve skills in reading to follow directions, skim, or scan, develop sequence in ideas, as well as achieve main ideas and generalizations. Analyzing what has been read and achieving unique ideas covering subject matter ideas are further relevant cognitive goals.

The affective dimension of objectives is equally important as compared to the cognitive domain. With desirable affective objectives, students learn to select and enjoy quality literature. When ready, a learner then enjoys characterization, setting, plot, irony, and theme of literature read. An individualized reading program needs to be in evidence in which the student can select the title and

achievement level of the library book. Hopefully, challenging library books will be selected by the learner. The teacher in a conference with the student needs to encourage, not force, increased interest in reading. Fascinating questions raised by the teacher and the student can be discussed within the conference setting. Evaluation of the success of each conference would emphasize students doing more reading and appreciating subject matter content.

The psychomotor level of objectives should receive adequate attention in the reading curriculum. With psychomotor goals, students develop proficiency in using the gross and finer muscles, as well as skill in eye-hand coordination. Numerous quality learning opportunities can be stressed by the teacher in the psychomotor domain. Thus, after reading content from basal textbooks or through an individualized reading program, learners may complete specific projects to reveal comprehension. These projects include

1. developing a mural or pencil sketching.
2. making a diorama.
3. creating a pantomime or creative dramatics presentation.

4. completing a movie set, showing illustrated scenes of subject matter read.
5. writing a different beginning or ending for the story with accompanying illustrations.
6. constructing a model relating directly to ideas contained in a story or reading selection.

Teachers of reading then need to have students attain balance among cognitive, affective, and psychomotor objectives.

A further reason why students may lack motivation in reading is that meaningful learning is not present. The reader needs to relate the self to the selection being read. The reading teacher must make certain that students understand subject matter. Students who do not read well enough to benefit from the reading of the textbook need assistance. A good reader could orally read the contents to the disabled reader as the latter follows along in his/her book. He/she can then learn to identify words in the process as well as listen to the ideas read. Attaching meaning to the subject matter listened to is then possible. Gifted/talented readers need to read challenging materials, otherwise a lack of meaning is not possible when subject

matter is boring and lacks maturity. These learners must also be assisted to achieve to their optimal which will be well above the grade level they are presently in. If a student with eighth or ninth grade reading abilities is asked to utilize textbooks written for fifth graders, it is no wonder that meaning cannot be attached to subject matter read. Or a fifth grader, reading on the second grade level, will not become an independent reader in understanding the content being read written for average achievers in grade five.

The key to successful reading achievement of students is to match their present level of attainment with materials of instruction that are meaningful and understandable.

Recommendations to Improve the Reading Curriculum

Numerous recommendations have been made by experts to improve reading skills on the part of students. The writer would like to recommend definite quality criteria to assist students to achieve more optimally in reading.

First of all, with the accountability movement in vogue, basic essential skills for students have been identified on the state or local school level. These skills are generally listed as behaviorally stated objectives. The

reading curriculum then becomes fragmented. Each student needs to attain the sequential precise ends. Too much time by the reading teacher needs to be spent on having learners achieve each behaviorally stated objective. Little time may be available to have students read subject matter in a holistic approach. Learning of isolated skills becomes relevant, rather than reading sequential ideas in order to learn. Certainly, comprehension of quality literature must be the end result, rather than acquiring isolated reading skills.

Secondly, the writer recommends that students have a greater voice in determining which sources to read from and which problem areas to solve, involving the processes of reading. Student-teacher planning of goals, experiences, and appraisal procedures emphasizes a sound philosophy of education.

Thirdly, well educated and trained teachers should be able to make good decisions in terms of providing for individual differences in reading. With state mandated objectives or local district instructional management systems (IMS), decision making by the reading teacher is minimized. Certainly, a quality teacher should be able to

determine scope and sequence better than can be done on the state or district wide level. Each teacher, regardless of age level of students taught or academic area taught, must be a teacher of reading.

Fourthly, state certification departments need to require in teacher preparation programs that all prospective teachers have adequate course work in the teaching of reading. Schools of education preparing teachers need to be certain that all have demonstrated proficiency in the teaching of reading. Teachers need to possess adequate knowledge and skill in teaching word recognition techniques and diverse kinds of comprehension skills to develop within students.

Fifthly, teachers need to stimulate students to enjoy and appreciate reading. It is a blessing to be a good reader. Nonreaders or those limited in the ability to read suffer grave consequences in society. The level of job attainment is lowered if an adult can not read at a required proficient level. Enjoyment of life is minimized due to not possessing needed skills in reading.

Sixthly, teachers need to guide students to move to higher cognition levels, as compared to rote learning and

drill experiences. Students should experience needed drill and practice in reading subject matter. However, life itself demands that learners be skillful in problem solving situations.

Seventhly, students should experience life vicariously. It is impossible to experience, in many situations, desirable situations in life. Through reading or vicariously, learners may experience what is good, true, and beautiful. Undesirable situations in life are costly to experience directly. With vicarious experiences in reading, what is undesirable can be experienced in a relatively harmless manner.

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Reform in the Reading Curriculum

Complaints are heard regularly pertaining to the number of illiterate people in society. Rather high percentages are given for individuals who cannot read. A twenty to twenty-five per cent figure is frequently given in news reports. The exact per cent will never be known. What constitutes an illiterate person in definition is a further point of debate. Illiteracy will come on a continuum, rather than as given absolute per cents.

There are people in society who, no doubt, fail to learn to read regardless of procedures, subject matter, and methodology. These individuals may even possess, seemingly, the capacity intellectually to learn to read. Those of inadequate capacities would need to be excluded from specific persons who have not learned to read when using per cents in the illiterate segment of the population. Even then, it is difficult to determine who lacks capacity in learning to read. All persons need to achieve as much as possible in the reading curriculum.

In this paper, the writer will zero in on issues and remediation procedures to improve the reading curriculum.

The Great Debate in the Teaching of Reading

A discussion of diverse procedures in the teaching of reading will need to occur. Presently, most states have identified core competencies and key skills for classroom teachers to emphasize in

reading instruction. Local teacher involvement is greatly minimized or nonexistent in selecting the state mandated objectives. It is believed that at the state level, a better job of selecting goals can be in evidence, as compared to teacher decision-making on the local level.

The district level may also identify numerous specific objectives for students to attain in reading. These become known as instructional management systems (IMS) or mastery learning. With IMS or mastery learning, as well as stated mandated objectives, each skill is clearly identified and stated in measurable terms. Either the learner has or has not achieved the skill as a result of teaching. The assumption to back the utilization of measurably stated objectives include:

1. reading skills to become good readers can be identified.
2. each skill can be stated in measurable terms, including an indicator to emphasize minimal levels of achievement.
3. students need to be tested frequently to insure mastery of each specific skill.
4. the end result will be improved reading instruction for each student.
5. all students can become literate individuals.

Too frequently, however, with the use of measurably stated objectives, the reading curriculum becomes fragmented. Isolated skills are taught and measured. Much time is spent on testing to

determine if the skills have been acquired by students. Additional time is spent by the teacher on recording the test results of each learner.

Reading skills then are taught and tested frequently. Time spent on the actual act of reading is greatly minimized. Learning of isolated skills, like phonics, does not involve the totality or gestalt of reading. Time spent on testing and recording of test results affects the time teachers spend on teaching reading and having students engage in reading content.

To minimize the dilemma of identifying core competencies and key skills, a great debate in the teaching of reading needs to occur. The debate should center around meeting individual needs of students in reading. These discussions should emphasize tenets and modifications of diverse philosophies in the teaching of reading. Which philosophies then should be emphasized?

Individualized reading has much to offer. A very minimal amount of time is spent in teaching specific skills. Reading is a more holistic enterprize, as compared to identifying and teaching each highly specific skill. In individualized reading, the entire time, as a whole, is spent on the actual act of securing ideas when learning to read. The student selects which library books to read sequentially. A wide variety of books on interesting topics needs to be in the offing. These books also should be on a variety of reading levels

to provide for the present achievement level of each student. The teacher is a guide and stimulater to challenge students individually to consume more reading materials. He/she has conferences with students on a one on one basis after a library book has been completed. A student may receive assistance on a specific skill, as identified in the conference. Otherwise in the conference, the teacher discusses subject matter that a pupil has read. The student can reveal the quality of reading by selecting content from the library book to read orally to the teacher.

A second holistic procedure to emphasize in teaching reading is the language experience approach. This method of teaching reading can be utilized on all age levels. For young students who do not have a writing vocabulary, the classroom teacher may print the ideas as presented by the former. To secure content, learners need to experience subject matter from audio-visual aids or from a story read to them. After these experiences, young learners present related subject matter to the teacher who in return prints these ideas in neat manuscript letters on the chalkboard. The teacher reads the content on the chalkboard with the involved pupils by pointing to the words and phrases. It does not take long before pupils begin to recognize words and phrases as the content is read with teacher guidance. At any age or grade level, when students have developed their own writing vocabularies, they may write up their own experiences

from ongoing lessons and units of instruction. Reading and writing are then correlated, not isolated entities.

A third holistic procedure in learning to read involves the use of basal readers. A minimal amount of time should then be spent on analyzing words, such as the use of phonics, syllabication, and structural analysis. Students must be guided to read sequential stories from the basal reader. The emphasis must be based on reading subject matter, rather than stressing analytic word attack skills.

Why are holistic procedures in the teaching of reading emphasized? Students can hurdle many problems in word recognition if interesting content is being read. Advocates of individualized reading tend to believe that analytic methods of instruction deemphasize interest in students wanting to learn to read. Interest, however, is a powerful factor in learning.

Secondly, if students are to learn to read, they must read and not spend excessive time analyzing words. Reading involves securing meaning from words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs.

Purpose in reading comes from perceiving reasons for learning. Reading fascinating and challenging content provides sequence in learning. Isolated behaviors, such as achieving measurable reading skills, lacks purpose on the part of students.

Research versus Philosophy in Teaching Reading

Presently, the emphasis in education is to base methods and procedures of teaching in reading upon research results. Research

must be emphasized continually to secure data on which methods to use and not use in reading instruction. However, there are many weaknesses in research procedures used in reading. Frequently, with research findings, the following erroneous methods are emphasized:

a professor summarizes research studies in reading and develops selected conclusions, such as all pupils need to have daily, sequential lessons in phonics. The research studies used to develop conclusions may be poorly done indeed. Random sampling procedures for the experimental and control groups are not in evidence. Or, the experimental and control groups were not equated, if randomization was not possible. Other weaknesses in research studies include a lack of adequate numbers used in the study for both the experimental and the control group. Further weaknesses of research include

1. no controls on who teaches the experimental versus the control group.
2. low validity and reliability of measurement instruments used in the study.
3. a lack of utilitarian values of the completed research. External validity then goes downhill.

Truly bad research has been printed in leading scholarly journals Examples of deficient research are the following:

1. during the 1960's, two studies received much recognition which concluded that schools had very little affect, if any, on student

achievement. One would not need to do a research study to indicate that schools, as well as other institutions, do influence students. If students are in school 180 days in one calendar year which includes a six hour daily schedule of curriculum and cocurriculum activities, a vacuum does not occur in terms of learners learning something. Here, bad studies were made that tried to prove what the researchers wanted to prove.

A second bad study, among others, was made in the early 1980's which had to do with class size. The researchers concluded that class size had nothing to do with student achievement. One may then conclude that a classroom teacher could teach 100 students in a room without sacrificing student achievement. That is a ridiculous conclusion indeed. All things being equal, adding another student to a classroom makes for an additional student for the classroom teacher to provide for. The only exception might be that an additional motivated student could stimulate others to achieve more optimally in the classroom setting. However, one needs to be careful in adding one more motivated student in a classroom, especially if thirty learners are in the class setting already. One need do no research to indicate that a fifteen to twenty student ratio per teacher is adequate in number. When non-academic students and/or disrupters exist in a classroom, the ratio needs to be lowered.

A third bad method of reporting research is to say "Our data

indicate ____." These reporters fail to say where they received their information. They do not mention how many responses were made in the data collected, nor the percent of return. Nothing is said about any controls implemented in the study. Sophisticated writing of these published manuscripts is in evidence. Mixed into the context is "Our data show ____."

A fourth defective type of study exists when school administrators in their "research" indicate that "teachers really do not want higher salaries. What they really want is to receive recognition for good teaching." To be sure, good teachers do want these non-monetary rewards, but they also need higher salaries in order to stay on as quality classroom teachers and live a lifestyle commensurate with a college/university graduate.

Research in education then has not, by any means, answered problems pertaining to increased achievement on the part of students. Those research results that emphasize raising student test scores only, fail to realize the importance of students using what has been learned and applying these ideas in the real world of society. Personal and social development of students are also lacking when raising test scores becomes the ultimate goal of teaching.

An additional problem of raising test scores pertains to how this is done. The writer has visited schools where teachers teach directly to a standardized achievement test. The test is directly in

front of the classroom teacher to teach for. A few articles have been published whereby superintendents were hired in a district to raise test scores of students and thus improve the curriculum. As can be expected, the test scores of students increased lavishly. This, no doubt, will always happen in a like situation.

Teachers and administrators must not give up on conducting and using research results. However, the status of present day research leaves much to be desired indeed. Critical evaluation of published research is important.

Educators might also look toward a study of philosophy to determine goals, learning opportunities, and appraisal procedures.

The Great Debate in education of the past can provide valuable input into curriculum improvement. William Chandler Bagley (1874-1946) advocated students mastering the essentials. In his The Essentialist Manifesto, published in 1938, Dr. Bagley believed that a core of knowledge exists which all should master. In the reading curriculum then, the same essential learnings would be required of all students. Interest in learning would not necessarily be an important criterion to follow in teaching, according to Dr. Bagley. Rather, the students need to will to learn. The learner must reach out and learn regardless of the amount of interest inherent in the reading curriculum.

John Dewey (1859-1952) in his book Democracy and Education advocates interest as a powerful factor to create effort in learning.

The goals of the student make for interest and effort.

Subject matter is not an end in and of itself. But, it is a means or instrumental to an end, according to Dr. Dewey. In the reading curriculum, students read to secure subject matter to solve problems. The problems must be realistic and life-like. School and society should not be separated from each other. Students might work in committees to gather data from reading, and other activities, to solve problems. John Dewey did not believe that common learnings, or essentials, existed which all students should learn. Rather, problems are unique to the student and the committee. Committees are utilized in society to solve problems. Therefore, the school curriculum needs to emphasize committee work and problem solving.

B. F. Skinner represents the philosophical school of thought of realism. With programmed learning, sequential steps for students to learn are written by the programmer. There is no input into the curriculum from students. Each sequential step of learning is measurable. Either a student has or has not responded correctly to a programmed item.

Realists believe that one can know in whole or in part the real world as it truly is. The reality of the real world in its specifics is identified in terms of behaviorally stated objectives.

In the reading curriculum, precise objectives can be identified according to realists. The chosen objectives can become a part of

the instructional management system (IMS) or state mandated core competencies and key skills. IMS and programmed learning emphasize measurably stated word recognition and comprehension skills.

Idealism, as a philosophy of education, emphasizes an idea centered curriculum. Idealists believe one can only know ideas and not know the real world as it truly is. With a reading curriculum emphasizing ideas, students need to do much reading to receive abstract learnings. Audio-visual aids would be used minimally, unless these materials assist students to secure concepts and generalizations in the abstract. The reading textbook, workbook, and worksheets provide major learnings for students. A variety of purposes or comprehension skills need to be taught students so that worthwhile subject matter can be learned. Word recognition skills are important as they assist students to secure abstract content.

Existentialism, as a fifth philosophy of education, emphasizes the individual student making choices and decisions, from among alternatives. To emphasize existentialist thinking, the teacher could have a variety of reading materials at a station. Means of interesting students in the diverse kinds of books and pamphlets should be in evidence, such as appealing bulletin board displays, as well as the teacher introducing selected materials to whet students' appetites for reading.

The sky would be the limit in terms of the numbers of materials

read, as well as the complexity of each. Decisions are up to the student. The latter may also determine the methods of appraisal to assess what any one reader got out of the reading materials in terms of comprehension.

Existentialists believe strongly in knowledge being subjective, not objective. The contents of the reading materials be it biographical, autobiographical, the fine arts, historical, geographical, scientific, among others, should assist students to look at and clarify values. To an existentialist, life consists of choosing from among alternatives in an absurb environment. To be human is to make choices in life. If others make decisions for the self, the latter ceases to be human.

The teacher must be a guide and a stimulator to students. He/she must help learners to make decisions, but not make choices for students.

A study of philosophy may well provide teachers with an excellent basis in making decisions in the reading curriculum. The Great Debate in reading might then center itself around

1. identifying the basics or essentials, as essentialists recommend. These core learnings would be common to all students. The essentials must be identified carefully. Research results can be brought into the identification process. The research could include a basic list of updated words that all students should master in reading for each

grade level. However, individual differences must be provided for among slow, average, and fast learners. Each student must achieve optimally.

2. using problem solving approaches, as experimentalists advocate. Problem solving stresses students reading subject matter to answer questions and securing solutions to problems.

3. identifying vital precise objectives for students to attain, as advocated by realists. Critical and creative thinking must not be minimized in the process.

4. gleaning worthwhile generalizations in reading in an idea centered curriculum, as emphasized by idealists.

5. attempting to clarify values within dilemma situations, as stressed by existentialists.

The Psychology of Learning

How can each student be assisted to achieve as much as possible in reading? This is a problem for educational psychology to assist in solving. Psychologists would tend to agree on selected broad guidelines in teaching students. These guidelines can be applied to the teaching of reading.

To assist students to achieve optimally in reading, he/she needs to be involved in choosing reading materials which possess personal interest. When objectives for students to attain are identified external to the learner, a lack of interest in reading may be an

end result. The student needs to have more control over the reading curriculum. The objectives, learning opportunities, and appraisal procedures should not be handed down, solely or in large part, from the state level, such as in state mandated goals. Neither should IMS procedures of teaching be handed down from the district level to the classroom level. Rather, intrinsic motivation is important in developing the reading curriculum. Being involved in choosing materials to read is important to learners. If students have a desire to read self-chosen materials, intrinsic motivation is then involved. From within, the learner then wants to read. The teacher is a guide and stimulator.

Sequence resides within the student. It does not reside within state mandated objectives or IMS. The student then needs to select stimulating, challenging reading materials. A wide variety of topics based on diverse levels of reading achievement is necessary. Students individually may then select which subject matter to read. The learner selects reading materials based on intrinsic interests. He/she chooses content based on personal interests, needs, and purposes. Intrinsic motivation is then in evidence. Sequentially, the student selects subject matter to read.

Extrinsic motivation procedures in reading should be utilized if intrinsic procedures do not work. Primary (the actual prizes) and secondary reinforcers (tokens to be exchanged for prizes) may

be used to encourage reading. Standards for receiving the reinforcers should be announced to students so the latter may be motivated to increase the amount and quality of reading materials consumed. The rewards are extrinsic to the actual act of reading. However, they do serve as reinforcers for students to do more reading and on a variety of topics.

There are general criteria for teachers to follow in teaching which all educational psychologists agree with. First of all, students should attach meaning to subject matter read. If learners do not understand what has been read, frustration tends to set in. Meaning theory in learning emphasizes students comprehend content while reading. A lack of meaning in understanding subject matter truly wastes the time of students, as well as of the classroom teacher in teaching-learning situations.

Secondly, learners need to perceive purpose or reasons for learning. If students do not perceive the value of reading, no doubt, limited comprehension and learning will occur. The teacher may explain to students the worth of reading specific selections. A deductive approach is then utilized. Should the teacher utilize a questioning approach to have students perceive the values of reading, an inductive method is in evidence.

Thirdly, students should experience interesting learning opportunities. If learners are attracted to reading subject matter, they

will attain more optimally as compared to a lack of interest. It behooves the reading teacher to permit students to select more of their very own materials to read. Interest from students will provide for effort in reading. Interest and effort become integrated, not separate entities. Students tend to be interested in content which they selected on an individual basis. Attending to the task at hand is important. Interest will make for the attending to time on task.

Fourthly, individual differences among students need adequate attention. There are slow, average, and fast achievers, on a continuum, in reading. Materials for students to read must be on diverse levels of achievement to provide for each category of achiever. Subject matter contained in the reading materials needs to be varied to provide for diverse interests that learners bring to the reading curriculum. New interests must also be developed within students. The reading teacher's philosophy of teaching must adhere to respecting differences among students. Each person has dignity, much worth, and must be guided to achieve as much as possible in reading.

In Conclusion

Reform in the reading curriculum is needed. A great debate in the teaching of reading is needed. State mandated objectives and IMS with their measurably written goals should be compared with holistic philosophies in the teaching of reading. The writer recommends strongly that a holistic procedure in reading instruction

be implemented. Reading involves understanding sentences, paragraphs, and larger bodies of knowledge. Dividing skills into precise objectives for learners to attain violates what the actual act of reading is about.

Quality research in reading must be refined and emphasized. However, research results are indeed confusing. Much negative research has been conducted and has little worth. Improved methods of conducting research must be emphasized. A study of the philosophy of education is very helpful in determining objectives, learning opportunities, and appraisal procedures. Perhaps, achieving a quality philosophy of teaching reading has more worth as compared to conducting and using research results. However, with improved means of doing educational research, their results can continually assist to improve the reading curriculum.

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